



Accreditation of impairment assessors

This fact sheet provides information for medical practitioners about how to become accredited as an impairment assessor in the Return to Work scheme and the Motor Accident Injury Assessment Scheme (MAIAS).

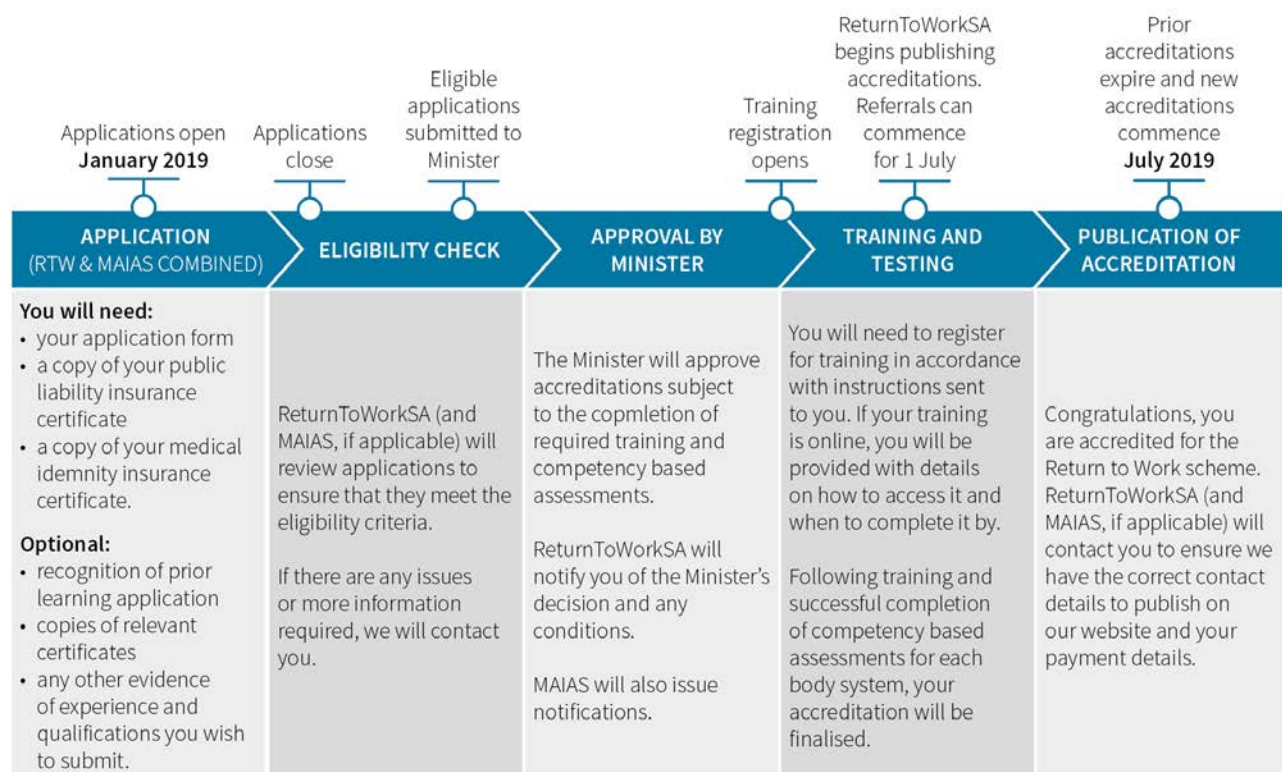
Impairment assessors are accredited by the relevant Ministers to conduct assessments that determine the level of impairment that has arisen from a work injury or,

for motor accident injury, an Injury Item Number as part of the ISV medical assessment.

The Return to Work scheme and the MAIAS accreditation period commenced on 1 July 2015 and current accreditations expire on 30 June 2019.

Applications for accreditation for the new accreditation period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022 are now invited.

The accreditation process



About whole person impairment assessments in the Return to Work scheme

A worker with a permanent impairment that results from a work injury may be entitled to receive lump sum payments and have access to serious injury support and common law, based on their degree of impairment.

The role of an accredited assessor is to assess injured workers and prepare assessment reports in accordance with the *Return to Work Act 2014* (the Act) and the *Impairment Assessment Guidelines* (the Guidelines).

Only a medical practitioner who holds current accreditation in the Return to Work scheme can undertake a whole person impairment assessment for the scheme.

The aim of this system is to establish a common set of standards for permanent impairment services and to provide consistency in impairment ratings across the Return to Work scheme.

For further details on whole person impairment assessments, please see the information sheet *The role of an accredited impairment assessor* available in the application pack and on ReturnToWorkSA's website.



About Injury Scale Value (ISV) Medical Assessment in the CTP scheme

In the Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance scheme, a person who is injured in a motor vehicle accident may be entitled to compensation for their injuries. Their entitlement to certain types of compensation is subject to thresholds based on the Injury Scale Value (ISV) of the injuries sustained.

MAIAS was established by the designated Minister (the Attorney-General) under section 76 of the *Civil Liability Act 1936* (CLA) to accredit medical practitioners (AMPs) to undertake ISV medical assessments and reports.

A key objective of the MAIAS is to create an independent system that provides consistent, objective and reliable ISV medical assessments to determine the Injury Item Number in accordance with the *Civil Liability Regulations 2013* (CLR). The Injury Item Number then assists in the claims settlement process in the determination of an ISV within the given range.

For further information relating to MAIAS, please visit: www.maias.sa.gov.au or telephone the MAIAS Administrator on 1300 303 558.

Step 1 – Application

An application pack can be requested by emailing wpi@rtwsa.com. This pack includes an application form, the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme* document, the *Motor Accident Injury Accreditation Scheme Rules*, the current impairment assessment fee schedule and information on the role of an impairment assessor for the Return to Work scheme.

You are invited to submit an application form with evidence of qualifications, registration, medical indemnity and public liability insurance. If you wish to apply for the MAIAS as well, please ensure you tick the box and sign the authority to share information in that section.

Completed application forms and required documentation must be sent to ReturnToWorkSA at the following address by **8 February 2019**.

Applications can be emailed to wpi@rtwsa.com or posted in a sealed envelope (marked confidential) to:

Impairment Assessment Services

ReturnToWorkSA

GPO Box 2668

ADELAIDE SA 5001

Please call (08) 8238 5727 if you have queries about the application process.

Step 2. Eligibility

To be eligible for accreditation, an applicant must be a medical practitioner with relevant specialist qualifications and experience, be registered with the Medical Board of Australia with no current notations or relevant conditions recorded and have current public liability and medical indemnity insurance. Further information on eligibility criteria can be found in the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme*, along with the terms and conditions of accreditation (provided in the application pack).

ReturnToWorkSA will check your application against the eligibility criteria and contact you if anything is missing, before your application proceeds to the next stage.

Step 3 – Consideration of and decision on applications

Each application is assessed as follows:

1. Assessment against the eligibility criteria to ensure the applicant has relevant specialist qualifications and experience for each body system for which they have applied. Each body system will be considered separately.
2. The Treasurer will decide to accredit Impairment Assessors for the Return to Work Scheme, subject to successful completion of training and competency-based assessments.
3. If an applicant has also applied for the MAIAS, the Attorney-General will decide to accredit medical practitioners, subject to successful accreditation Return to Work Scheme and completion of training and competency-based assessments.

The decisions of the Treasurer and Attorney-General will be communicated to the Applicants in writing.

Step 4 – Training and competency-based assessment

After the Treasurer has made a decision on accreditation, successful applicants will be invited to undertake the required accreditation training in the body systems for which the Treasurer has approved accreditation.

The training is on the Guidelines' application of the American Medical Association's *Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, 5th edition* (AMA5) (AMA4 for the Visual system) and the GEPIC for psychiatric assessment.

The format of this training may be either face-to-face (group) or online, depending on the number of attendees and the training module concerned. The applicant will be advised which training they are required to undertake.

An independent training provider contracted by ReturnToWorkSA will provide the training for the RTW scheme and the MAIAS.

All applicants must have a copy of the American Medical Association's *Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, 5th edition (AMA5)* which can be purchased in a hard copy or electronic format.

Depending on their experience assessing whole person impairment in the Return to Work scheme, currently accredited assessors seeking renewal may only be required to undertake the competency based assessments, however training will be made available to those who wish to revisit it.

The training for new assessors in the Return to Work scheme includes:

- Two compulsory introductory modules:
 - outlining the Return to Work scheme, the role of impairment assessors, expectations and other information
 - using the AMA5 Guides.
- A training module for each of the body systems for which applicants have applied and been approved for accreditation (face-to-face or online training).

If the applicant has also applied for MAIAS, specific additional training for MAIAS and the CTP Scheme will also be provided. The applicant will be notified which training they are required to undertake.

The training for new assessors in the MAIAS scheme includes:

- Two compulsory introductory modules:
 - Introduction – to MAIAS, the CTP Scheme and legislative requirements of AMPs
 - The ISV Medical Assessment process, service standards and reporting requirements; overview of application of ISV table and Application of AMA5 that differs from the Return to Work Scheme
- For new assessors and some current assessors seeking renewal, training modules specific to the ISV medical assessment, including:
 - Spine – use of Range of Motion (ROM) method
 - Pain – use of AMA5 Pain Chapter
 - Application of ISV tables and factors for determining Injury Item Numbers

The *MAIAS Training Manual* will be provided to all new MAIAS applicants.

Each applicant will be provided with a competency-based assessment at the end of each completed body system training module. The assessment will be in a case study format. Each assessment must be completed and

returned to ReturnToWorkSA for the training provider to review *within three weeks* of the training module being completed.

The training provider will also review additional competency based assessments specific for the MAIAS.

Recognition of prior learning

An applicant may apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) if they have completed a recognised permanent impairment training course (including interstate and international courses). RPL applications are to be identified when applying for accreditation (please see question on the application form).

To be considered for RPL status an applicant must have completed the recognised course within the preceding five years.

An applicant who receives RPL may be exempt from body system training but will still be required to undertake the compulsory introductory modules and pass the relevant body system competency-based assessment.

Step 5 – Accreditation

Upon successful completion of the required training and competency based assessment, ReturnToWorkSA will confirm accreditation on the Treasurer's behalf. Successful applicants will be advised of their accreditation details and will be listed on ReturnToWorkSA's website as an accredited assessor.

Upon receipt of the accreditation confirmation from ReturnToWorkSA, assessors may accept whole person impairment assessment requests for the body systems for which they are accredited **from 1 July 2019**, in line with the Accreditation Scheme, Guidelines and requirements of the Act.

If seeking accreditation for the MAIAS, upon successful completion of the required training and competency based assessments and the Agreement, the MAIAS Administrator will confirm accreditation on the Attorney-General's behalf. Successful applicants will be notified of their accreditation details and will be listed on the MAIAS website as an Accredited Medical Practitioner (AMP).

Upon receipt of the accreditation confirmation, Accredited Medical Practitioners may accept ISV Medical Assessment referrals for their accredited body systems from 1 July 2019 in line with the MAIAS Accreditation 2019 Scheme Document, the MAIAS Training Manual and requirements of the CLA and CLR.

Maintaining accreditation

To maintain their accreditation, assessors must continue to meet the terms and conditions of the Accreditation Scheme and may be required to attend continuing education as requested by ReturnToWorkSA, on behalf of the Minister. Assessors will be advised periodically of these education sessions that may be held either face-to-face or remotely, depending on the requirements at that time.

To maintain accreditation in the MAIAS, assessors must continue to meet the terms and conditions of the Return to Work scheme along with the terms and conditions of MAIAS. Assessors may be required to attend continuing education as requested by the MAIAS Administrator on behalf of the Attorney-General.

Conditions of accreditation

Assessors should ensure that they are familiar with the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme and MAIAS Rules (if applicable) terms and conditions of accreditation and service standards.

Frequently asked questions

Will my information be kept confidential?

An applicant's information will be available to those involved in the assessment process and kept on file by ReturnToWorkSA. The name and details of assessment location(s) of accredited assessors will be placed on ReturnToWorkSA's website listing of accredited assessors, along with the body systems in which you are accredited. If you are also applying for the MAIAS scheme and have completed the authority in section 10 of the application form, information will be shared between ReturnToWorkSA and the CTP Regulator in its capacity as MAIAS Administrator.

What should I do if I cannot provide copies of all of the required documents by the date required to submit applications?

Copies of all required documents need to be received with your application by **8 February 2019**.

If you are unable to provide ReturnToWorkSA with copies of all required material, please send in your completed application form with the copies you do have. Please make a note on your application advising when the remaining copies will be sent. Accreditation cannot be finalised without all the necessary documentation.

Is there a cost for the accreditation training?

Return to Work scheme will meet the cost for this round of accreditation training. The costs of future accreditation training may be passed onto applicants seeking to be accredited. Accreditation training costs for

the MAIAS scheme will be borne by the CTP Regulator for this accreditation round.

Is accreditation for a fixed term?

Yes. The accreditation term will run from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022, a period of three years. Any accreditations that are granted within this period will also cease on 30 June 2022 to ensure there is a common expiry date.

What can I charge for my services?

The fees chargeable for whole person impairment assessment services will be detailed in the Return to Work scheme's medical fee schedule and guidelines. A copy of the current fee schedule is included with the application package. These fees will be updated each financial year as part of the fee setting process.

The Return to Work scheme's medical fee schedule applies to MAIAS assessments and reports.

Will I be guaranteed a certain level of work?

No. Accredited assessors may receive requests for whole person impairment assessments from a number of parties (ReturnToWorkSA, ReturnToWorkSA's claims agents and self-insured employers). MAIAS accredited assessors may receive requests from CTP insurers and claimants.

Can I get help if I have a question on a particular assessment?

Yes. ReturnToWorkSA can provide or arrange appropriate assistance on the application of assessment methodologies. However, this does not include providing explicit advice or opinions on specific cases. This will be covered in the accreditation training.

Do I have to follow a standard report format?

Yes, all reports must be submitted in accordance with the standard format required as stated by the Guidelines. A copy of the report template can be downloaded from ReturnToWorkSA's website. This will be covered in training. Payment will not be made for reports that do not follow the standard format, and any non-standard format reports will be returned to the assessor for amendment.

For MAIAS, reports must use the ISV Medical Assessment Report templates prescribed by MAIAS Rules.

What levels of service will I be expected to provide?

Accredited assessors are expected to meet the requirements of the Guidelines and the conditions outlined in the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

For MAIAS, accredited medical practitioners are expected to meet additional requirements of the MAIAS Rules.

Will ReturnToWorkSA or MAIAS provide me with feedback on my performance?

Yes. ReturnToWorkSA will be able to provide accredited assessors with confidential performance feedback and an opportunity to discuss this feedback.

ReturnToWorkSA reviews each report provided to the Claims Agents for compliance with the Guidelines. You may be contacted for clarification or in relation to any concerns.

MAIAS quality review program may result in findings requiring discussion with the MAIAS assessor, requiring the assessor to undertake counselling or additional training.

Can my accreditation be suspended or cancelled?

Yes. An assessor's accreditation may be reviewed, suspended or cancelled. The details are included in the conditions outlined in the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

ReturnToWorkSA is available to support assessors who have difficulty in meeting the conditions outlined in the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

MAIAS assessor accreditation may also be reviewed, suspended or cancelled. Any change in RTW Scheme accreditation status will immediately apply to MAIAS accreditation status. Details are included in the MAIAS Rules.

What happens if someone makes a complaint about me?

ReturnToWorkSA will investigate any complaint it receives about an impairment assessor. All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner and the assessor will be provided with opportunity to respond. More information is provided in the Guidelines and the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

MAIAS will also investigate any complaints as outlined in the MAIAS Rules.

Where can I get more information?

A range of resources for impairment assessors are available on the ReturnToWorkSA [website](#) on the Assessor News and Resources page. Some resources are included in this application pack.

The MAIAS [website](#) contains resources about MAIAS accreditation.

For further information, including how to become an accredited assessor, please email wpi@rtwsa.com.